



State Long-Range Transportation Plan 2005-2030

Corridors and International Borders Report

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Prepared by



Wilbur Smith Associates

MI Transportation

MICHIGAN LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Overview of this Report.....	1
1.2 MDOT’s Role in Michigan’s Economic Growth and Competitiveness	2
1.3 Integrating the Corridor Approach with <i>MI Transportation Plan</i>	3
Chapter 2. Process to Identify Corridors and Activity Centers.....	5
2.1 Definitions.....	5
2.1.1 Activity Centers.....	5
2.1.2 Corridors of Highest Significance.....	5
2.1.3 Regionally and Locally Significant Corridors.....	5
2.2 Corridor Subcommittee, Peer State Reviews, and MDOT Regions Listening Session.....	6
2.3 Analytical Approaches.....	6
2.3.1 Replicating Previous Approach	7
2.3.2 Activity Center Approach.....	7
2.3.3 Resulting Activity Centers and Corridors	8
2.4 Corridor Nomenclature.....	10
Chapter 3. Corridors of Highest Significance	12
3.1 MDOT’s Corridors of Highest Significance vs. Statewide Transportation System.....	17
3.2 Significance of Designation as MDOT “Corridor of Highest Significance”	21
3.2.1 Corridor Management Policies	22
3.2.2 Operational Policy Options for Consideration	24
3.2.3 Investment Policy Options for Consideration	26
3.3 MDOT “Corridor of Highest Significance” Profile Summary	26
3.4 Broad Policy-Based Corridor Strategies.....	27
Chapter 4. Performance Measures.....	28
4.1 Performance Measures	28
4.2 Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measure Rationale	29
4.3 Integrating Performance Measures and Strategies.....	30
Chapter 5. International Border Crossings and Issues	32
5.1 MDOT’s Vision and Policy for its International Border Crossings.....	33
5.2 Michigan’s International Border Crossings.....	34
5.2.1 Value at Crossings.....	35
5.2.2 Volumes at Crossings	39
5.2.3 Changes in Volumes and Value at Crossings	40
5.2.4 Aviation Crossings.....	41
5.2.5 Ferry Crossings.....	42
5.3 Issues.....	42
5.3.1 Capacity, Congestion and Delays	42
5.3.2 Homeland Security	43
5.3.3 Physical Conditions of Infrastructure	43
5.3.4 Intergovernmental Challenges.....	43

5.4 Physical Conditions and Needs	44
5.4.1 International Bridge	44
5.4.2 Blue Water Bridge	44
5.4.3 Ambassador Bridge and Detroit-Windsor Tunnel	45
5.5 MDOT's Border Strategies, Initiatives, and Investments	45
5.5.1 MDOT International Border Crossing Strategy and Action Plan	45
5.5.2 Past Investments and On-going Initiatives	46
5.5.3 US/Canada Discussions and Policy Initiatives	48
5.5.4 Proposed Investments 2005 - 2030	49
5.5.5 Aviation Strategies, Issues, and Initiatives	50
5.6 Homeland Security Strategies, Initiatives, and Issues	51
5.6.1 Initiatives	51
5.6.2 Maritime Initiatives	52
5.6.3 Information Technology Initiatives	52
Chapter 6. Conclusions and Next Steps	53
6.1 Significance of being a Corridor of Highest Significance	53
6.2 Performance Measures	53
6.3 Strategies, Policies, and Programs	54
6.4 Corridor Plans	54

List of Tables

Table 1: Activity Center Criteria and Data	7
Table 2: Comparisons – Existing Statewide Infrastructure Totals to Corridors of Highest Significance including International Border Crossings	18
Table 3: Comparison of corridor values based on some of the characteristics used to define each corridor's value	20
Table 4: Performance Measures and Criteria	28
Table 5: Corridor-specific Goals, Objectives, and Rationale	30
Table 6: International Border Crossings and Ports of Entry	35
Table 7: US – Canada – Mexico – Michigan Trade (in Billion \$)	38
Table 8: US – Canada Border Crossings and 2005 Volumes	39
Table 9: Annual Volumes	40
Table 10: Border Crossing and Supporting Corridors Investments 1995 - 2005	47

List of Figures

Figure 1: Activity Center and International Border Crossings.....	9
Figure 2: Corridors of Highest Significance and International Border Crossings	10
Figure 3: Regional/National Corridors of Highest Significance	16
Figure 4: Lettered Corridors of Highest Significance	17
Figure 5: Population within a 20-mile geographic area around the Corridors of Highest Significance	19
Figure 6: US Canada Exports and Imports	36
Figure 7: 1999 Weekly Truck Trips Crossing US / Canada Border	37

Executive Summaries - Companion Documents

MI Corridors of Highest Significance Profile Summary – Executive Summary I
Economic Regions Corridor Summary – Executive Summary II

Appendices

Appendix A - References	A-1
Appendix B - Process to Identify Corridors and Activity Centers.....	B-1
Appendix C - Activity Center Profiles	C-1
Appendix D - Corridor Strategies and Compatibility Screening	D-1

Executive Summary

Michigan's 2030 integrated transportation system will be the foundation of the state's economic vitality and will sustain quality of life for its residents. In order to safely and efficiently support the movement of people, goods, and services, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) recognizes that passengers and freight travel must pass seamlessly along geographic corridors on multiple modes between locations or activity centers both within and outside Michigan. The decision to conduct a corridor-based analysis is grounded in the belief that specific corridors serve and support specific economic sectors. By improving specific corridors the people, businesses and industries dependent on these corridors will be strengthened as will ultimately Michigan's economic competitiveness.

This *Corridors and International Borders Report* summarizes this integrated, multi-modal journey of people, goods and services which occurs on a daily basis along the 19 Corridors of Highest Significance within the state of Michigan. This report defines these corridor's value to the state's economy and it evaluates the travel conditions and needs, describes objectives, and suggests broad, policy-based strategies to take advantage of economic opportunities or address transportation deficiencies. It also describes Michigan's International Border Crossings and the issues that may impact international travel and the global competitiveness of Michigan.

This report also includes two separate executive summary reports. The first report entitled *MI Corridors of Highest Significance Profile Summary – Executive Summary Report I* provides a detailed corridor profile for each of the 19 Corridors of Highest Significance. This corridor profile document also presents a summary of opportunities and missing or deficient links in existing and future multi-modal systems that hinder the movement of goods and services traveling in or through each corridor. The second executive summary is organized by the *MI Transportation Plan's* 17 Economic Regions. The *Economic Regions Corridor Summary – Executive Summary Report II* document presents brief economic and corridor profiles and key strategies for the Corridors of Highest Significance within each of the *MI Transportation Plan* Economic Regions.

Corridor Identification: Selection and agreement on the MDOT Corridors of Highest Significance involved a data rich, analytical process that included considerable review and discussion by a *MI Transportation Plan* corridor subcommittee comprised of individuals from throughout the department. MDOT utilized an activity-based approach to identify its highest corridors of significance. *MI Transportation Plan's* activity centers, as discussed in this report, are:

Geographic locations with concentrations of people, jobs, educational and health service facilities, tourist attractions, or other similar economic-based facilities or services. International border crossings are included within some activity centers.

A total of 50 activity centers were identified within Michigan plus six outside of Michigan. MDOT then developed a process to connect these activity centers. This grouping of activity centers was accomplished by identifying concentrations of activity within the state and then connecting these centers via various modes. These desired connections were then labeled as

corridors and defined as either a Corridor of Highest Significance or Regionally or Locally Significant Corridors. *MI Transportation Plan's* Corridors of Highest Significance are defined as:

An integrated, multi-modal system of transportation infrastructure along geographic corridors that provide a high level of support for the international, national, and state economies. These corridors connect activity centers within and outside Michigan and serve the movements of people, services, and goods vital to the economic prosperity of the state.

“Regionally and Locally Significant Corridors,” are defined as:

An integrated, multi-modal system of transportation infrastructure along geographic corridors that provide a high level of support for a specific sub-state region of Michigan's economy. These corridors connect to and augment the Corridors of Highest Significance and serve the movements of people and goods within or between activity centers.

The map below identifies the selected activity centers and the corridors of significance.



Source: Wilbur Smith Associates, 2006.

Policy Considerations: Because of their value and importance to Michigan’s current and future economic health and competitiveness, MDOT will implement specific policies to guide management, operational, and investment decisions relative to transportation facilities within the MDOT Corridors of Highest Significance service areas. During the implementation phase of the *MI Transportation Plan*, the following policies and strategies will be applied to the Corridors of Highest Significance. The overall goal for these corridor policies is to guide MDOT in making the right business decisions to make or keep these integrated multi-modal corridors and the economic regions which they connect economically competitive.

- **Leadership in Coordination:** MDOT will continue to take a leadership role in transportation issues statewide by developing and facilitating partnerships to ensure transportation system deficiencies along these corridors are minimized.
- **Innovative Partnerships and Programs:** MDOT will continue to actively seek and support partnerships with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), local governments, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Regional Planning Agencies (RPA’s), and businesses to identify and advance innovative, multi-modal programs, financing, and solutions that may improve safety, mobility, and economic competitiveness within the Corridors of Highest Significance.
- **Minimizing Construction Impacts:** MDOT will continue to apply innovative and specialized construction methods, for all transportation facility construction projects on Corridors of Highest Significance in order to minimize impacts to the traveling public.
- **System Maintenance:** MDOT will continue its leadership role, in coordination with its transportation partners, to ensure that adequate maintenance levels are achieved statewide across all modes of the transportation system to protect the public’s investment for the future.
- **Corridor Completion:** MDOT will strive to address missing or deficient links and gaps within all Corridors of Highest Significance to produce a corridor of uniformly high quality throughout its length.
- **Corridor Plans:** Specific corridor-based plans and strategies will be initiated for strategic portions of National Corridors of Highest Significance that have immediate or near-term system condition needs. Each corridor-specific plan will provide a master plan to guide implementation of such improvements.
- **Access Management:** MDOT will continue to work with local governments to implement Access Management, TDM, and TSM programs along the non-limited access Corridors of Highest Significance. MDOT will also continue to partner with its local officials to uphold access management principles by cooperatively reviewing development plans and driveway permit applications.
- **Carpool or Park and Ride:** MDOT will continue to evaluate, construct and or expand, as warranted, carpool or park and ride lots within the corridors.

- **Roadside Facilities Strategy:** Roadside facilities such as rest areas, welcome centers, and roadside parks provide an added amenity along Corridors of Highest Significance and will be maintained in such a manner that citizens of the state can be proud of them.
- **Systemwide Operational Plans:** MDOT will develop its programs in a manner that seeks to maximize efficient transportation system expenditures. For example MDOT will continue to participate in the Regional Concept for Transportation Operations (RCTO). A RCTO is the collaboration and coordination between transportation system managers responsible for operating the transportation system on a day-to-day basis.
- **Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS):** MDOT will work to implement multi-modal ITS technology within all Corridors of Highest Significance.
- **Reduce Delays:** MDOT will work to minimize disruption to mobility from incidents, construction, and recurring congestion along Corridors of Highest Significance by developing and applying corridor-specific operational improvement strategies.
- **Priority:** In its project prioritization, programming, and funding, MDOT will give priority to needed improvements to all modal facilities along the Corridors of Highest Significance.
- **Planning Funding set-asides:** MDOT will annually assess whether SPR funds can be utilized to implement MDOT sponsored corridor planning studies and innovative programs to address safety, access, choices, integration, or mobility on its Corridors of Highest Significance.
- **Innovative Financing:** MDOT will routinely identify, consider, and seek innovative funding and financing (such as public-private partnerships) for major projects along the Corridors of Highest Significance.
- **Indexing Investment Strategies:** To ensure Michigan is best positioned to compete in a global economic environment, MDOT will develop an indexed investment strategy.

Conclusions and Next Steps: The economic vitality of each of Michigan's unique economic regions is linked to the quality of its transportation system. This report is only an initial step in identifying and implementing the best strategies, policies, programs, and priorities to address the issues and conditions identified within the *MI Corridors of Highest Significance Profile Summary* and the *Economic Regions Corridor Summary*.

The *MI Transportation Plan* provides concepts and principles for the decisions needed to realize the vision of a fully integrated system. The beneficiaries of an integrated system are Michigan's people and businesses, who will use the integrated system to achieve their greatest human and economic potential with greater freedom from the barriers to safety, mobility, and sustainability. For example, corridors within the majority of MDOT's Metro Region and several other urbanized core cities are part of a complex interdependent freeway and non-freeway system. Often planning along a single corridor does not adequately address the needs of these complex systems. Since the network of both freeway and non-freeway needs must work together, particularly for maintenance of traffic requirements that are demanded by the public,

a network analysis is often the most applicable approach to the development and identification of strategies and infrastructure improvements. It should also be noted that network analysis will need to continually evolve due to the varied implementation schedules of programs, changing travel patterns, and construction associated within these urbanized areas.

Improvements to specific corridors serving particular economic sectors, however, will improve Michigan's economic competitiveness. A corridor-based analysis allows for the development of a vision with specific goals for achieving the vision within the area. An examination of the areas allows MDOT to pinpoint any bottlenecks, gaps, or obstacles to identify remedies, in order to provide functional and efficient movements throughout the transportation network. It follows that improvements to specific corridors serving particular economic sectors can improve Michigan's economic competitiveness.

In-depth corridor studies and network analysis will be conducted and corridor plans developed for strategic Corridors of Highest Significance. The studies will identify the primary industrial sectors supported by the corridor and identify their industry-specific transportation needs. The plans will:

- A. Present a detailed set of programs, policies, and projects needed to improve the economic competitiveness of each corridor.
- B. Address corridor opportunities, freight adequacy, barriers, gaps, and missing links.
- C. Present a prioritized list of projects, ideas and programs needed for funding and partnerships, while addressing both financial and operational needs for each corridor.